



AUSTRALIAN  
PLANTS SOCIETY  
— Geelong —

# Correa Mail

Newsletter No. 294 – March 2014

## NEW START TIME FOR MEETINGS !!

# 7.30 PM

## Please don't forget

### OUR NEXT MEETING

March 18<sup>th</sup>

The speaker for our first proper meeting of 2014 is Wilma Trew. Wilma will be talking to us about THE TREE PROJECT of which she is the area co-ordinator. She is one of those wonderful folk who become involved through accident and involve many others with their enthusiasm.

Wilma also has an active interest in the Victorian Volcanic Plains Grassland plants, in particular the 3214 area. She has a personal hobby which she calls 'Project 1000' – her own commitment to giving away 1000 indigenous ground covers per year into the 3214 area. So she teaches people an extra dimension to diversity in their home gardens and that there are choices to help the local environment right here in suburbia. She has completed some studies in Conservation & Land Management and completed a Habitat & Conservation Management Course. Wilma also volunteers in the conservation area.

In her email to me Wilma wrote "*I have never done a Power Point presentation, but once I get warmed up onto a favourite topic I can find lots to say. Especially in a friendly environment where people ask questions, as Harry assured me you have in your group.*" So, we look forward to a lively and interesting talk.

### GET WELL SOON

Our 'one of a kind' president has had some surgery recently and we wish him a speedy recovery. It won't be the same at the meetings without you, Harry.

### FIRST OF THE YEAR BBQ

Once again we are grateful to Linda and Arthur Pape for their generosity and hospitality in hosting our 'First Meeting of the Year BBQ'. The weather was perfect, and about thirty members came along for a fun night. There was much discussion and friendly banter, and, once Arthur's guitar was dusted off, a fair bit of (tuneless?) singing as well. It was great to see new faces, as well as the regular rowdies, and I hope we haven't frightened Sheila and Rich away.



The pool was put to good use, as you can see.

## 2014 PLANT SALE - April 5<sup>TH</sup> & 6<sup>TH</sup>

Our plant sale is on again in just a few weeks time, and we are going to need your help once more. There will be a list circulating at the next meeting, where you can put your name down for a specific task, or just to let us know when you are available so we can assign you to whatever task is needed.

We are operating over a slightly shorter period this year, given the poor attendance on Sunday afternoons

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in the past. The sale will run from 9.00 – 5.00 on Saturday and from 9.00m – 1.00 on Sunday.

Please be sure to help out at some time over the weekend. Those who do help out are invited to the big BBQ celebration after closing on the Saturday night. This is usually a highlight of the year, and well worth a few hours of your time to qualify ☺

If you want to add your name to the list, but can't make the meeting, please email me with your available times at [adefoster@internode.on.net](mailto:adefoster@internode.on.net)

#### PLANTS FOR SALE

#### Labels

Some of you took home any plants from the potting-on day to care for them prior to the sale. Please supply me with a list of the plants that you have, with those that are ready for sale highlighted. I need time to make the labels ready for the big day.

#### WORKING BEE

22<sup>nd</sup> March

As in previous years, we will hold a working bee to help get the site ready for the plant sale. Please come along on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> from 9.00 am, armed with gardening implements and a will to work. We'd love to see you there.

#### DICK SOUTHCOMBE WIDER GEELONG FLORA LECTURE Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March



The Geelong Field naturalists are once again hosting the Wider Geelong Flora Lecture. The guest speaker is Ben Zeeman, who will be discussing his

work on '*Vegetation Dynamics of a Long Unburned Coastal Woodland. Changes 1971 to 2012*'. This work, carried out at the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve, formed a thesis for Ben's work at Latrobe University.

They meet at the 'Friends' room at the Geelong Botanic Gardens on Tuesday March 11th at 7.30 pm. Entrance is at the intersection of Holt Road and Eastern Park Circuit in Eastern Park Melway 452. G4.

#### EUCALYPTUS CLADOCALYX - Roger Wileman

*Eucalyptus cladocalyx* is more commonly known as the Sugar gum. The name refers to the sweet taste of the juvenile foliage which contains the chemical compound glucoside. It is a native to South Australia where it occurs in three distinct locations - The Flinders Ranges towards the top of the Spencer Gulf; The north side of Kangaroo Island, and the eastern side of the Eyre Peninsula near Coffin Bay.

The best trees and form occur in the southern Flinders Ranges where they can reach a height of 35

m. The form on the Eyre peninsula is much shorter reaching up to 15 m and of an irregular shape. This form is known as *E. cladocalyx nana*.



*Eucalyptus cladocalyx* – Sugar Gum, Wilson's Road

There is also a recently introduced form that has dark burgundy- purple foliage. I have seen this form in new gardens beside houses, which may be a problem in future, as it will eventually grow as tall as the sugar gum in the photo.

*Eucalyptus cladocalyx* has been planted as wind breaks in southern, central and southwest Victoria as well as many areas in South Australia. Many of these plantations were directly seeded into the ground where they were to grow. When you see the extent of some of these plantations the amount of seed needed must have been enormous. There is an old road side plantation between Skipton and Lismore, at Mingay. The length and height of this plantation is almost too much to take in.

Now, back to the tree in the photo. This magnificent tree is in the small reserve in Wilson's Road, Whittington, off the end of Oxford St. I know part of the history of this particular tree as my grandmother lived just a short distance away.

In the early 1950's there were a few more sugar gums growing with this particular tree. The others were cut down to make way for the ministry of

housing development. This last remaining tree was the site of the original lost dogs home and Swinburne Veterinary Clinic.

As I mentioned, my grandmother built and lived in a small hut at 131 Wilson Rd from the mid 1940's while she saved and built a new home at the front of the block. I think the new home took about 10 years to complete. From the back door of the old house you could see all the way to the Leopold hill, with only a few houses in between. The tram service stopped at the top of Ormond Rd and Boundary Rd., at the Whitewings Road House. There was also a small gauge train that would bring the bagged salt from Cheetham Salt works along the eastern side of Wilson Rd to the siding which is now part of the Bellarine rail trail.

Although this beautiful remaining tree is in the reserve and temporarily protected, I can only imagine that one day someone will decide this tree is unsafe and it will join the rest of the original plantation.

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### OPEN GARDEN SCHEME

**March 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Plant Fair at Burnley Gardens. 40 exhibitors from Victoria and interstate at the Open Garden annual Plant Fair. Swan Street, Richmond. Talks, tours etc. Entry is \$15.

**April 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>** – Dunns Creek Estate, 137 Mcllroys Rd, Red Hill. A historic rambling garden whose owners have created an extensive wetlands fed by a natural spring. Self sown native plants provide a habitat for swamp wallabies, frogs and 60 species of birds. Vineyard, alpacas etc.

**April 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>** – Wyanda, 166 Point Leo Rd, Red Hill South. Rock lined waterway, two wetlands, well labelled tracks through the forest and a viewing platform to Waterhole Creek. Guided walks around the bushland areas every half hour.

#### A PURPLE PATCH

#### Loosestrife

I've taken to walking the banks of Barwon River with my camera lately, hoping to increase my collection of bird photos. In mid-February I walked from Queen's Park to the Fyansford pub on the north side and back on the south. The banks were a riot of Purple loosestrife, *Lythrum salicaria*.

This plant grows wild in the ditches beside the roads all over Finland, where our son lives, so I was surprised to learn that it is a native plant. It is found across Europe, Asia and North America, in NW Africa, and the SE of Australia.

It prefers a wet habitat, so is common in drains, ditches, and around the edges of swamps or the banks

of rivers and streams. However, it will tolerate extended dry periods.

According to the ANBG website, *Lythrum salicaria* is an easy garden plant, thriving in any soil and generally healthy. It is a beautiful subject for late summer colour in a border, shrubbery, large pond or slow-moving water. If well-watered and reasonably sheltered, it reaches over 2 m high. It will also grow in coastal gardens.



***Lythrum salicaria* – Purple Loosestrife, Queen's park**

Unlike many perennials which grow bare in the centre with age, this plant forms a bushy and well-shaped clump. The tall stems are strong, branching freely, and they tend to curve inwards in a self-supporting manner so that staking is not necessary.

Lateral buds develop while the main spikes are flowering and these continue the season till near the end of March. The soft, light green foliage often turns red in aging towards autumn. Top growth dies down for winter and should be cut back to ground level.

Propagation is by root division or seed, and self-sown seedlings often appear in open ground. If desired, cuttings may be taken from non-flowering laterals in midsummer and struck outdoors in shade. This species is not grown commercially in Australia as often as might be expected, though in other countries named garden varieties have been grown for years. These range from white to pink and deep purple, and include double flowers. Short flower spikes last well as a cut flower in water.

#### GROWING AUSTRALIAN MAGAZINE

We have come into a sizable collection of old issues of 'Growing Australian'. If anybody is interested in adding to their collection, please let me know.